

Michigan Community Blood Centers

Grand Rapids–Saginaw–Midland–Bay City–Traverse City–St.Joseph www.miblood.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE October 11, 2006

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LAKE LEELANAU WOMAN WINS IN STATE BLOOD DRIVE CHALLENGE

GRAND RAPIDS: Blood donor Laurie Kupferer, 53, of Lake Leelanau, has won the third-quarter prize drawing in the State of Michigan Employee Blood Challenge, a year-long campaign to increase blood donation among state employees across Michigan.

Staff from Michigan Community Blood Centers will formally present Kupferer with her prize, a one-night getaway for two at Maple Ridge Resort on Lake Michigamme, at a special ceremony at 1 p.m. on Monday, October 16, at the State Building in Traverse City, where Kupferer works at the Department of Human Services.

Kupferer is a regular blood donor whose donations to date total more than 5 gallons. Each gallon represents 8 one-pint donations, with each pint of blood able to help three to four people.

The first statewide blood donation initiative of its kind, the State of Michigan Employee Blood Challenge is a cooperative effort of the State of Michigan and three blood providers: American Red Cross, Upper Peninsula Regional Blood Center, and Michigan Community Blood Centers. The goal of the campaign has been to boost blood donations from state employees between November 2005 and October 2006. State employees were asked to donate through blood drives hosted by state offices or agencies, or at donation centers and blood drives in their communities.

According to Linda Barar, vice president for corporate relations at Michigan Community Blood Centers, the quarterly prize drawings for all state employees who have tried to donate blood have provided a token of recognition and thanks honoring the contributions of hundreds of participants.

Long before moving from Farmington Hills to northwest Michigan two years ago, Kupferer developed a regular blood donation routine. "Our church would do a blood drive four times a year and I would donate whenever I could," she explained. "It is such a simple thing to do and only takes an hour or so of your time. Now that I work in Traverse City at the State Office Building, our office does a blood drive on a quarterly basis. Michigan Community Blood Center brings its Blood Bus over to the parking lot and I can give blood at work. How convenient is that?"

Kupferer has appreciated the encouragement she has received from her employer to donate blood. "It is nice that not only the State of Michigan supports and promotes this community service, but so do my boss and coworkers," she said.

Across the state, Michigan Community Blood Centers provides 100 percent of the regular blood supply in four major regions with a combined population of more than 1.5 million. This year, Michigan Community Blood Centers will collect well over 95,000 pints of blood to provide for the needs of 22 hospital facilities across Michigan's lower peninsula.